

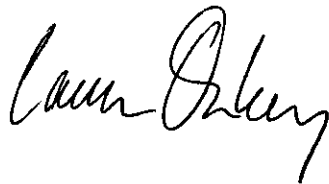
# **My Goodness, My Tourists!: The Role of Guinness Advertisements in Irish Tourism**

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

by

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A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Lauren Onkey". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'L' and 'O'.

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## Abstract

"My Goodness, My Tourists!" is an analysis of artist John Gilroy's famous "My goodness, my Guinness" advertising campaign from a cultural studies perspective. In this paper, I give Gilroy's work historical context, and then analyze how the ads have become international representatives of Ireland. I propose that these advertisements have become something like tourist brochures for modern times. The extremely visual nature of both tourist publications and advertisements lends itself to this type of analysis. To study international advertising campaigns in the contexts of tourism and the modern world is to learn the cultural work that these campaigns can perform for a culture's identity.

## Acknowledgments

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## My Goodness, My Tourists!: The Role of Guinness Advertisements in Irish Tourism

When a tourist enters the Guinness Storehouse in Dublin, she must look up. She has been queued outside the main entrance, and once she enters the revolving doors, she must ride an escalator up one story to the great hall, where she can purchase her ticket. During this initial transport, the tourist is training her eye towards her destination — upwards. After the escalator ride has finished, her neck is still craned to see what is above her. She is now standing in a cylindrical atrium that reaches six stories high [fig. 1]. The cylinder is congested with more



fig. 1 - The Storehouse atrium

escalators moving upwards, steel beams spanning the circular openings on the various floors, and popular characters from Guinness advertisements. The tourist instantly finds the scale of the room diminished because she has found something familiar — enlarged images of toucans with pint glasses on their beaks [fig. 2]. However, the scale of Guinness' advertising campaigns is much grander than the contained space of this atrium — indeed, it is much grander than the Storehouse itself.



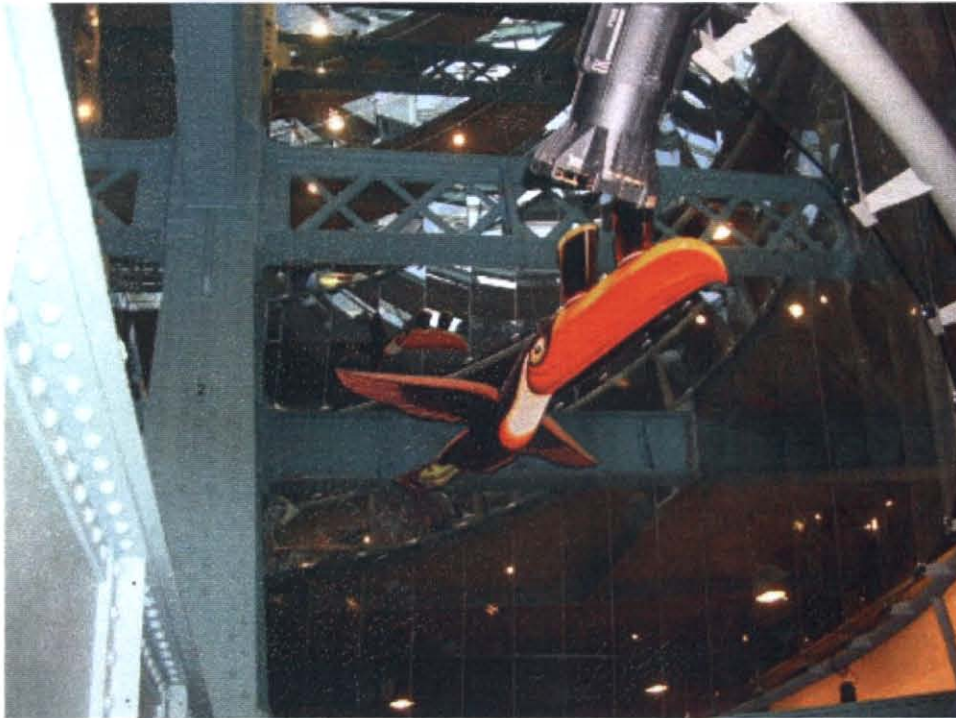


fig. 2 - Gilroy's famous toucans

Consider the tourist — she has come to the Guinness Storehouse because it interests her. It interests her because she is familiar with the Guinness brand and products, having encountered them before her Storehouse visit. Even though she is not from Ireland, she knows the Guinness name and she knows those toucans. Thanks to a popular marketing campaign, these are some images that the tourist associates with Ireland and Irish culture. Paradoxically, the tourist ceases to be overwhelmed in the atrium because she has seen these characters before. To feel comfort when accosted with an image that has circulated around the world is to rename that which is global as that which is local. For Guinness advertisements to appear and to become familiar in foreign countries is a sign of a globalizing world — a world in which a product such as Guinness can become a tourist attraction, both geographically and conceptually. That is, at the same time the tourist walks through the Storehouse (the geographic destination), she experiences the idea of Guinness that this place has advertised and sold to her (the conceptual destination).

Guinness advertisements have become vehicles to promote Ireland's tourism industry to modern audiences. Although the market for Guinness may not be as broad as the market for

tourism in Ireland, the two depend upon one another for commercial success. That is, tourists may see either Guinness advertisements or tourist publications as motivations to travel. To publicize a visual representation of a tourist destination is an effective means of marketing. A tourist chooses a destination because she wants to see certain sites that have become symbols of that country. John Urry calls the phenomenon of a person's desire to visit a country because of exposure to such visual stimuli (simply) the tourist gaze, suggesting that "the gaze is constructed through signs, and tourism involves the collection of signs" (3). That is, a tourist must consume the signs she associates with a country in order to participate in the tourist experience that the country can provide.

Like the allure of the tourist gaze, Guinness ads now appeal to consumers as signs of Irish culture. The modern tourist chooses to visit the Guinness Storehouse to reap the cultural experience presented in the familiar ads. Often, the advertisements for the national product and for the nation itself work in conjunction to draw tourists to Ireland with multiple visual incentives. On the Guinness web site, people seen drinking the product are social, strong, and savvy — certainly this is a culture that a tourist would like to experience. A television commercial on the Irish Guinness site shows an insecure soccer player who must score a penalty shot to win the game. He envisions the opposing team as gladiators and monsters, but when he imagines his own victory — including a celebratory pint with his friends — he makes the shot and his teammates carry him off the field [fig. 3]. Through his physical and mental prowess, the athlete has elevated himself to a socially privileged status — and surely anyone who participates in his celebration at the pub will be elevated to this status as well. In many contemporary Guinness advertisements, the sociable atmosphere of the famous Irish craic is presented as a commodifiable product that a tourist or consumer will be able to absorb if they visit Ireland (or, barring that, the nearest pub or liquor store). When used as a subject of the modern tourist gaze, Gilroy's playful creatures are more easily associated with recent advertisements' portrayal of Irish pub life, and with the genial images of Guinness that are known today.





fig. 3 - The victorious soccer star

With these speculations in mind, how does a national product become an enduring and worldwide symbol for a cultural experience? How does Guinness shape the culture it represents? What purpose do Irish cultural signifiers such as Guinness advertisements perform when they are introduced to foreign countries? How and in what ways can a foreign market comprehend the products and signs of another culture? By analyzing John Gilroy's popular "My goodness, my Guinness" advertising campaign and its adaptability for contemporary tourist consumption, these questions will provide an understanding of why visual enticements frequently spark consumerism.

## THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Guinness advertisements make impressions on today's tourists because they have been disseminated around the world as pictorial representatives of Ireland. Obviously, a print advertisement works on premise of visual consumption. This principle becomes significant when we consider Urry's theories of the tourist gaze. Urry suggests that "places are chosen to be gazed upon because there is anticipation, especially through daydreaming and fantasy, of intense

pleasures” associated with the destination (3). We are reminded of the victorious soccer player, who escapes into his mind in the face of seemingly insurmountable odds. The gazes of the tourist and of the advertisement consumer are not entirely the same, but they are comparable through the exercise of this anticipatory desire. The tourist gaze is a specific type of consumer gaze that tourist literature has precipitated. Although the tourist gaze is primarily a phenomenon that occurs while the tourist is in the destination country, she would not have gone to that country without certain visual stimuli that influenced her choice to visit. This preliminary stage of formulating the desires that contribute to the tourist gaze might be advanced with the use of brochures, travel books, or even advertisements for a country’s products. Because it promotes desire for consumption, a Guinness advertisement becomes synonymous with many other types of tourist publications.

Moreover, these advertisements spark the desire not only Guinness products, but for concepts of Ireland related to the craic. Such images are common in both Guinness ads and tourist publications. In his essay on the role of Irish pubs in Irish identity, Mark McGovern argues that “the Irish pub is a notional experience encapsulated in the concept of the ‘craic’” and that the drinks industry has come to provide “cultural tourism” of the Irish people themselves (85). This theory can be expanded to refer not only to the Irish pub, but to any other notional experience that might contribute to the atmosphere of pub culture. The notions that a tourist would encounter before her visit would be predominantly visual images of the culture, experienced during the planning phase of her travels through the preliminary tourist gaze. Guinness advertisements in conjunction with modern tourist literature are no exception, and must be considered important cultural commodifiers. We must be aware of the practice of visual commodification throughout the analysis of Gilroy’s “My goodness” campaign.

In “Ideology and the State,” Louis Althusser discusses the ability of state institutions — for example, the tourism industry and advertising media — to produce ideologies that both “[represent] the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence” and “[have] material existence” (153, 155). For the tourist as a consumer, this means that to travel is



to be the subject of an “imaginary relationship” with the country that the experience of touring would provide. Although the “material existence” of the country and the tour itself are quite real, the subject must submit to tourist ideology and take on the dual role of tourist and consumer in order to forge the necessary relationship. The more material representations and signs of the culture the tourist consumes, the more successful she becomes in her performance of this dual role. This success is obtained when the tourist returns to her home country — she is part of the privileged class that has means to travel and to experience other cultures. For tourist literature and Guinness advertisements to hail the tourist into this dual role, the tourist gaze must be implemented — both types of text work on extremely visual levels to allure potential subjects for consumerism and tourism. Visual interpellation to the tourist ideology is another crucial concept in the analysis of Gilroy’s advertisements as a field of contemporary tourist discourse.

Concepts of cultural distance and othering are necessary to sell a tourist destination. Urry proposes that “gazes are constructed through difference,” so we must understand that a person is only a tourist when seeing sites outside her everyday experience (1). Edward Said details the process of differentiating one culture from another. He uses the Orient as an ongoing example of this process. Said calls the Orient “a European invention, and...a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences” (87). However, the projection of exoticism on other countries does not only apply to the cultural diversity between European and Asian nations. All of Said’s descriptions of the Orient could just as easily appear in a brochure for Ireland, or nearly any other tourist destination for that matter. Said also mentions that “the relationship between Occident and Orient is a relationship of power, of domination, [and] of varying degrees of a complex hegemony” (89). Colonialism is comparable, in many ways, to many tourists’ motivations for traveling to a specific country. That is, the tourist wishes to visit a place because she feels as though experiencing this difference will somehow elevate her to a place of privilege, as discussed in the context of hailing. Now that we have established a theoretical background by which to analyze Gilroy’s advertisements, we must



understand the history and evolution of Gilroy's campaigns as advertisements and, eventually, as forms of tourist literature.

#### HISTORY: GILROY IS GOOD FOR GUINNESS (1925-1961)

In May 1921, Ireland was partitioned into the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. The first print advertisement for Guinness was published on February 7, 1929, in several British daily newspapers (Davies 6). Even at the inception of Guinness' advertising, the campaigns were international. British citizens had been traveling to Ireland for business or for leisure since the reign of Queen Victoria. Spurgeon Thompson writes that early Irish "tourist discourse...attended at least a century and a half of British colonialism" (269). Politically, the partition was a necessary first step for Ireland to grow as an independent economic power. The newly founded Republic took logical steps to retain the British market. Ireland had not developed an official tourist industry at this point, but the British market would become a key audience in the years following World War II. For example, Irene Furlong notes that in the 1950s, Irish hotelkeepers "expressed a preference for British visitors, with many of whom they had built up connections of long standing, and who were better spenders and less critical than Americans" (169). When a country decides to promote itself to tourists, the country must use images that are already familiar to consumers. Since images of Guinness as part of the tourist experience in Ireland were already popular with the British, those images would become enduring means to sell tourism and to invoke the tourist gaze from the 1950s until present day.

According to Jim Davies' book on the history of Guinness Advertising, the SH Benson advertising company handled the Guinness account during the first half of the twentieth century. Samuel Benson, the company's founder, accepted advertising accounts based on the criteria that "the product should be socially acceptable and available at a reasonable price" (9). Benson's earliest Guinness advertisements emphasized the health benefits of drinking "a Guinness a day." The agency hired John Gilroy in 1925. One of Gilroy's first major campaigns was "Guinness for Strength," which premiered in the early 1930s. This campaign is clearly a transition from the

popular image that “Guinness is good for you.” After the consumers had become familiar with Gilroy’s cartoon images in “Guinness for Strength,” the “My goodness” ads would be easy to recognize stylistically. However, the novelty of the campaign and the pictures of animal “consumers” rather than human ones would be as surprising as the petty Guinness theft portrayed in each ad.

As a complete campaign, “My goodness, my Guinness” first appeared in 1935. Supposedly, Gilroy was inspired to create the now-famous advertisements after spending a day at the Bertram Mills’ Circus in London, but actually completed the studies and sketches of animals at the London Zoo. The first poster of the long-running campaign (Gilroy continued to create posters that featured the zoo animals until 1961) featured the image of a seal with a pint balanced on his nose and the harassed zookeeper’s failed attempt to recover his drink [fig. 4]. Also in

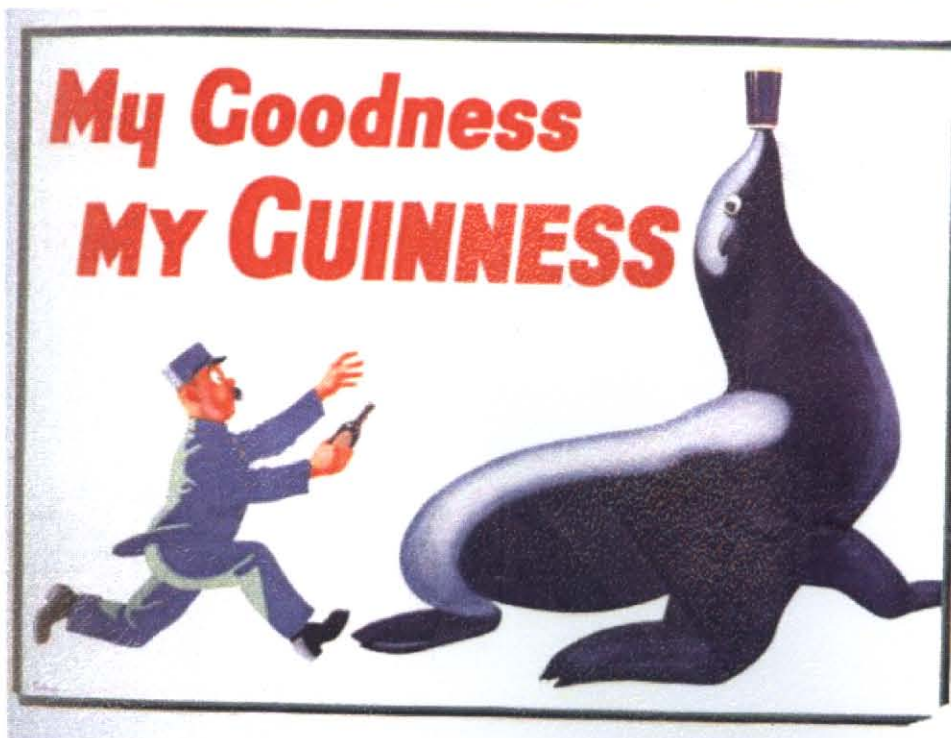


fig. 4 - Gilroy’s first “My goodness” advertisement

1935, the image of the toucan premiered, but it featured copy by mystery writer Dorothy L. Sayers and the “Guinness is good for you” slogan, not the “My goodness” text [fig. 5]. The birds featured in the original “My goodness” run are the ostrich that has swallowed a pint glass and a



pelican carrying seven bottles in its beak — one for each day of the week, a holdover from the “Guinness a day” campaign. The posters that were truest to Gilroy’s initial vision of simplicity, surprise, and amusement were displayed in the late 1930s. In 1936, the Park Royal branch of the Guinness brewery opened in London. Furlong notes that Ireland established an official tourist board, An Bord Cuartaíochta, in July 1939 (165). The opening of this brewery, the premier of the new campaign, and the foundation of the National Tourist Board coincided perfectly for Guinness’ publicity, sales, and tourism marketing in the United Kingdom.



If he can say as you can  
**Guinness is good for you**  
 How grand to be a Toucan  
 Just think what Toucan do

fig. 5 - The toucan makes his debut

Gilroy’s animals appeared in advertisements that were not necessarily “My goodness” related, although several new “My goodness” ads surfaced throughout the forties and fifties.

Also, Gilroy continued to create advertisements that did not feature his famous animals. “My goodness” evolved off the wall from the poster format to television commercials. One commercial featured the famous seal in clay animation with the zookeeper chasing him. Another featured the ostrich dancing with the zookeeper (“Through Time”). Gilroy’s official career with SH Benson ended in the forties, but the artist continued to produce occasional posters and advertisements for Guinness well into the fifties. By the end of the twenty-six year animal campaign, the creatures were rarely pictured with the words “My goodness, my Guinness.” Throughout World War II, the slogan was used in ads that could be related to the war, featuring soldiers or caricatures of prominent political figures. Since they had become icons, the animals were instead shown in large groups, often without accompanying text. One of these later ads was created to commemorate the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II and did not even picture the product or make reference to the Guinness brand name [fig. 6]. Gilroy created his last animal



fig. 6 - A celebration of Anglo-Irish alliances

poster (and his last poster for the company) in 1961 — the creatures stand in a group at the beach [fig. 7]. By this time, Guinness had begun new campaigns that once again featured human consumers. The market needed a new approach, so the zoo animals were abandoned.



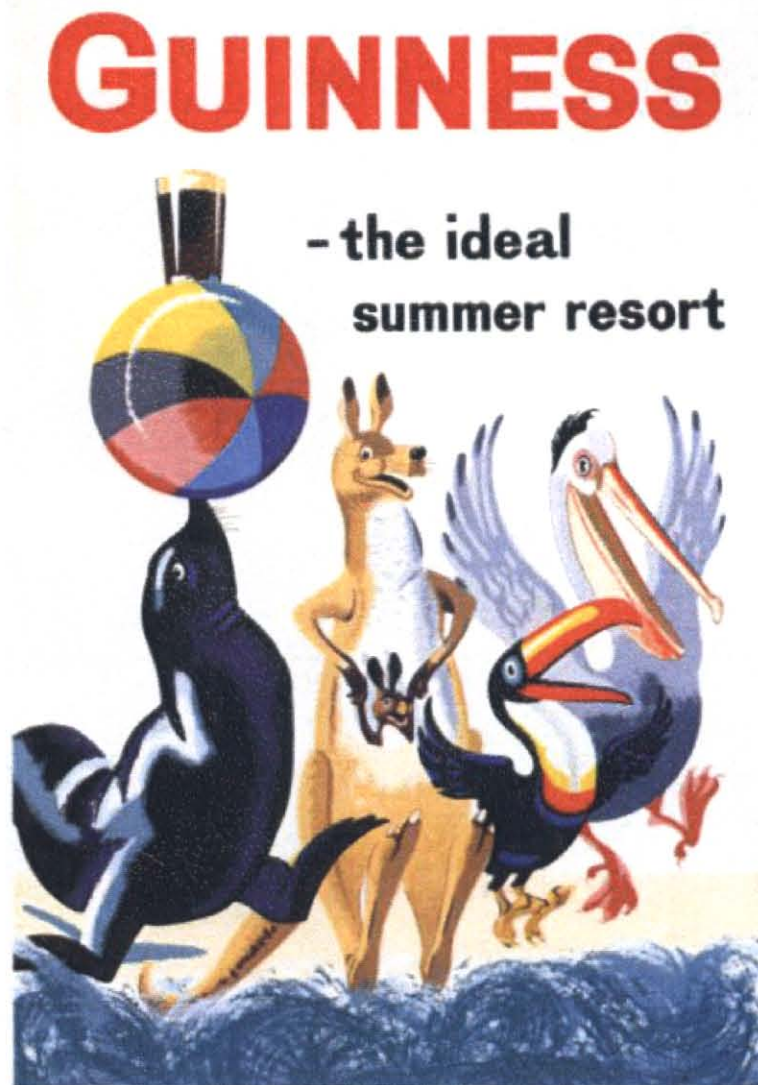


fig. 7 - Gilroy's final Guinness poster

## THEORIZING GUINNESS IN TOURISM

Before we take a closer look at the campaign, we must understand why "My goodness" is the Guinness campaign that most appeals to modern tourists as well as alcohol consumers.

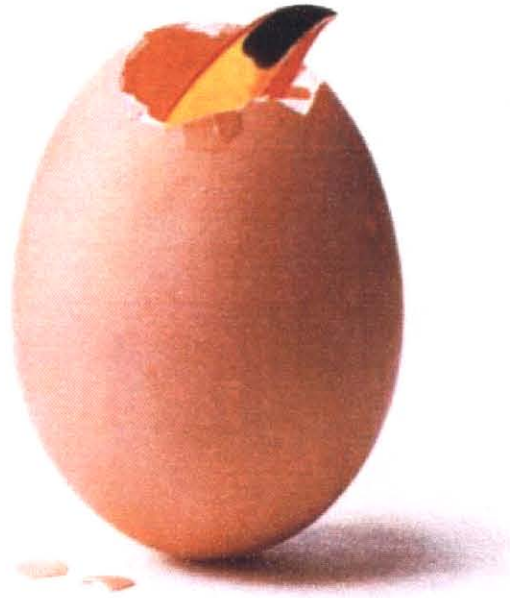
Gilroy is widely regarded as the best-known artist working on a Guinness advertising campaign, and his campaigns are considered some of the longest-enduring and most widespread images of all time. David Ogilvy, whose advertising firm handled the Guinness account until 1998, was of the opinion that Gilroy's advertisements "have never been excelled anywhere" (94). With such

renown, the advertisements are a logical subject of the consumer gaze and, within approximately the last ten years, the tourist gaze. Weighing Gilroy's various campaigns against one another, we can see how "My goodness" is the best representation of Guinness advertisement in conjunction with tourist publications. "My goodness" also has a sense of exoticism that is lacking in Gilroy's other campaigns. That is, the animals are familiar to someone who has been to the circus or the zoo, but the original target audience in Britain would not see seals or ostriches on a daily basis. Although exotic creatures are sometimes featured in other campaigns — such as "Guinness is good for you" or "Guinness Time" — the shock portrayed in "My goodness" is lacking.

The combination of exoticism and surprise are two qualities presented in many of today's tourist publications. The *Let's Go* 2004 guide to Ireland states that "the island's breweries and distilleries are its holy wells. The Guinness Storehouse guards the secret of its black magic, but doles out ample samples at the tour's end" (2). The myths of Ireland as an island imbued with magical qualities have existed for centuries. Although the exoticism in *Let's Go* differs from the bizarre zoo creatures in Gilroy's advertisements, to impose a representation of peculiarity on a country's national image is still a way of distancing the country as an "other." Also, although "My goodness" premiered in the earliest years of Ireland's tourist industry, the revival of the ads for use in today's market illustrates their place in the contemporary tourist industry. We have seen that out of all the Guinness ad campaigns, "My goodness" best presents these exotic qualities. Because *Let's Go* and Gilroy's ads have projected othering qualities on the Guinness product, and even though the exoticism differs from one text to the other, the works have both suggested that Guinness embodies the distancing characteristics of exoticism that are associated with Ireland.

The use of Gilroy's antique ads in the contemporary tourist industry implies that Ireland is a place revived from the past. The first revival of the "My goodness" characters was in 1979. An advertisement read "Breaking soon, the new Guinness campaign." In fact, the campaign was not entirely new. The "breaking" referred to the accompanying visual — a recognizable orange and black toucan beak protruding from the open top of an egg shell [fig. 8]. The toucan's





Breaking soon, the new Guinness campaign.

fig. 8 - Gilroy's rebirth

renewed popularity came with the realization that Gilroy's advertisements had become icons of "Guinnessness" — that supposed quality of the Guinness products, commonly presented in the company's advertisements, to encapsulate Irish craic in the form of a drink. Along with the products themselves, Gilroy's advertisements contribute the concepts of commodifiable craic to modern tourism in a similar way. However, the ads work on a visual level rather than the experiential level that a pint of Guinness in an Irish theme pub would provide. The Gilroy revival has changed the advertisements' appeal to a broader tourist market than just those interested in sampling Guinness. Antique advertisements might invoke the tourist gaze from travelers searching for Irish heritage and traditions, an elite group who recognize and/or remember past campaigns.

The use of classic advertisements as a way to market Guinness specifically to this type of tourist is the most blatant use of the advertisements in the travel industry. The brand and characters have become so popular that nearly every tourist shop in Ireland carries Guinness-related products [fig. 9]. Tourists can now consume Guinness in more diverse forms than gazing



fig. 9 - Every conceivable use of the Guinness logo

upon advertisements or drinking a pint. A Guinness tourist can purchase almost anything the company's logo might conceivably adorn: typical clothing (tee-shirts, hats, pajamas, underwear, ties, flip-flops); golf, soccer, and rugby accessories; pint glasses and other bar-wear that one would expect from an alcohol manufacturer; pint-shaped candles; Gilroy's creatures as figurines; candies that have been "enhanced with the flavor of Guinness"; posters of Gilroy's classic advertisements. The Guinness WebStore even features a compact "Kule Kube" refrigerator for use in home bars "or wherever you chill out with a pint of Guinness" ("WebStore").



Once Gilroy's campaign was resurrected nearly thirty years ago as a marketing classic, the ads became increasingly more significant to tourism over time, eventually becoming a sign of modern Irish craic and culture. Not only do the advertisements appeal to tourists, but they encapsulate the tourist experience. Like the zookeeper who is shocked to find that an animal might want a pint of Guinness, a tourist visiting Ireland during or after the first wave of the Gilroy toucan revival might learn that the country is not as rural or idyllic as she had expected. Ireland is not living in the past, as the use of antique alcohol advertisements might seem to suggest. Obviously if Ireland were such a rural place as some people think, marketing departments would not be able to ship these advertisements all over the world. Also, the ability for a viewer to be familiar with Gilroy's campaign and at the same time unfamiliar with the animals presented is much like a tourist's gaze placed upon a new country. That is, she has seen the pictures of the country, but when she visits, she experiences the shock that is so clear in "My goodness." In this campaign, we see surprise and unfulfilled expectations at play. The zookeeper, like the tourist, expects a specific situation from which the actual experience diverges significantly.

We know that Guinness advertisements portray a potential tourist experience, but is this necessarily an Irish experience? Dean MacCannell writes that most tourists "are motivated by a desire to see life as it is really lived," but if the images in Guinness ads do not portray anything resembling Irishness, the ads are misleading enticements, and the tourist might reject the gaze as deceptive (94). In contemporary advertisements, the line between the realities and illusions of Irish life is more easily confused than in Gilroy's ads. Clearly, Ireland is not overrun by zoo animals, nor is the country known as the home of a world-famous zoo. In fact, these animals could be found in any zoo in the world. If the popular rumors are true, the creatures were not from an Irish zoo at all. For that matter, the original ads did not appeal to an Irish audience, but a British one. Since the opening of the Park Royal brewery, this audience no longer had a reason to import Guinness from Ireland. Considering Gilroy's own national identity, the location of the new brewery, the source of the ads' inspiration, the target audience, and such ads as the Queen

Elizabeth coronation commemoration, Guinness sold as a result of the “My goodness” campaigns might as well have been a British product.

However, this cultural confusion is a necessary departure from Irish national images. Even though the gaze is based around concepts of difference, tourists would not respond to images that are not comparable to their own experiences. As Barbara O’Connor argues, “the creation of tourist images...involves selection from a range which already has a currency in the market countries” (70). A tourist must be allured with images within his awareness. In the case of the British overtones of the “My goodness” ads, the original target audience would have been attracted by these images. The era during which the ads were initially marketed specifically to a British audience was the time between the World Wars. During this time, travel would have been a luxurious commodity, but a desired means of relaxation that a select group of wealthy travelers were likely to have taken. An example of a tourist publication that works in much the same way is the use of images of friendly and rural Irish natives in contemporary tour books [fig. 10]. One might assume that this is an image of a true Irish experience, but we have already seen



fig. 10 - A friendly, rural home (Kerry Bog Village postcard)



that Ireland is not trapped in an agrarian lifestyle. In this way, the image is a departure from contemporary Irish culture. We might also be tempted to think that these images do not present a familiar experience to tourists the way Gilroy's ads appealed to a British tourist's gaze. After all, these are not natives of any other country — they could not be familiar to someone outside of Ireland. However, these images do appeal to a type of familiarity. The concept being sold in these images is not cultural familiarity, but hospitable familiarity, relaxation, and welcome. Images of pleasant (or peasant) Irish natives might appeal to an American tourist coming to trace his ancestors. A friendly Irish native effects the gaze from an American because that native might be a key to the tourist's genealogy and Irish-American cultural knowledge.

Like the alluring images in the preceding examples, Gilroy's creatures have become familiar to natives of many countries as enduring concepts of Guinnessness. Urry postulates that when tourists "see unfamiliar elements of other people's lives which had been presumed familiar," the intrigue for travel is piqued (13). However, tourists will begin to recognize images that have been represented as frequently as Gilroy's creatures have. The longer the gaze is implemented, the more familiar the images become. In "My goodness," Gilroy created easily accessible advertisements that are some of the most well-known, most memorable of the century. The popularity of the advertisements in the original British market furnished them with the possibility of use abroad. After the toucan revival in the 1970s, the ads were no longer limited to a distinctly British audience. The tourist's comfort with these familiar images makes travel more likely — a tourist would not want to travel to a place with which he is entirely unfamiliar. The Gilroy ads have given the tourist at least a marginal level of familiarity with Ireland, and by gazing upon the advertisements, the tourist now has a desire to travel.

The advertisements picturing zoo animals comfort a tourist because of their familiarity, and are further comforting because zoo creatures evoke a childish atmosphere. This campaign emphasizes the jovial atmosphere frequently associated with Irish craic. The implication in the ads seems to be that purchasing Guinness will return you to a time of fewer concerns, of childlike expectations that may be easily satisfied. The zoo is a destination that evokes this

innocent wonderment, and so is Guinness in both of its guises. Conceptually, a pint of Guinness will let you experience the craic presented in the advertisement; geographically, the Storehouse is something like a candy store for adults. In an Ireland that is frequently romanticized in tourist literature, we see comparably simple expectations that should be easily satisfied. However, in either the case of viewing Guinness advertisements or traveling to Ireland, the tourist might lose a bit of the romanticism and childish joy after having chased her expectations. Guinness is a globally renowned product that hails all types of people, not just a handful of elite consumers. Likewise, Ireland might not meet expectations because it has recently become a nation with a global economy moving quickly (and successfully) away from its agrarian past.

The confusion of expectations can be understood another way, with the use of Althusser's proposals concerning interpellation. In order for the individual to take on the role of a tourist and consumer, she must be visually hailed with something familiar. As mentioned in a previous example, many tourists in Ireland find that the familiar is the familial — the concepts of a return, a rediscovery of self and home, and other intimate slogans are clearly calling individuals to experience something they supposedly know already. In this way, Gilroy's revived ad campaign calls the modern tourist to recognize the Guinness zoo creatures that have become landmarks of the advertising world. However, as soon as the advertisements draw a person in, they simultaneously drive her away. Here, just as in the example at the Storehouse, the consumer's ideas of familiarity become confused. Although the images are familiar because of the recurrent gaze, the contents of these images are not — most Guinness consumers do not see these types of animals on a daily basis, nor would a contemporary consumer be able to recall the original presentation of Gilroy's campaign. In a broader view, a tourist could be disappointed when she realizes that she is not actually at home in Ireland. That is, if the slogans of a home away from home and famous welcome are true, then the tourist would be treated as a privileged guest and might expect special treatment. Upon arrival, the tourist will most likely realize that she is not going to be treated any better because she is a tourist, and might actually be treated worse.



From the unfamiliarity of seemingly familiar images, we can see that Said's concepts of othering and exoticism are at play here as well. After the tourist realizes that she recognizes the creatures but does not see them in her everyday life, after she realizes that she has been welcomed into the country but is not truly at home, she understands that this culture is quite different from her own. Unfortunately, this realization of difference does not always come with acceptance and positive awareness of the differences. For example, the first subheading in *Let's Go* under the section "Irish Culture" is "Meat and Potatoes" and the second is "Guinness and Craic." The first subheading explains that "Irish food can be fairly expensive" but that most food is "simple and filling" and "that's what you'll get [during a visit]" (69). The second subheading presents the concepts of jovial pub life common to modern Guinness advertisements. Although the *Let's Go* writers probably did not intend condescension, the Ireland portrayed here is a poor country that might not be able to accommodate a tourist with luxurious demands. A tourist who has such an impression of Ireland is aware of a cultural difference, but also considers Ireland with the harmful practice of othering that Said has set forth.

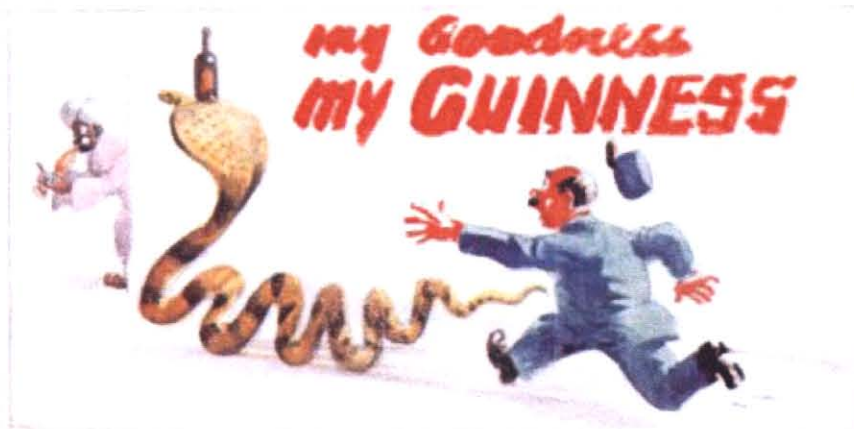


fig. 11 - A rejected Guinness poster idea — the thrill of the exotic

Both Guinness advertisements and tourist publications project qualities of exoticism and desirability upon Ireland. The tourist has come to experience a different culture, perhaps a culture that has been portrayed as a land of the past, as an exotic place. Through the simple practice of publicizing antique advertisements in a modern context, Ireland is portrayed as a

country in chronological stagnation — the country is apparently not modernizing. In the realm of the exotic, consider a rejected “My goodness” ad in which a snake charmer is luring a cobra, Guinness bottle poised upon its head, away from the zookeeper [fig. 11]. This ad most closely resembles Said’s argument in *Orientalism* that directly concerns Asian countries. In this advertisement, the hailing and subsequent aversion are twofold. First, the viewer is drawn to the ad and driven away in the same way as with the other ads featuring exotic creatures. Second, the viewer might realize that in her willingness to be allured, she has become like the exotic snake in the ad, rushing towards the (also) exotic charmer. The viewer has allowed an unfamiliar image to call her to her role of consumer/tourist, and she has responded in the affirmative. Additionally, the supposedly familiar advertisement grows even more unfamiliar in this situation because Guinness is not something that belongs and calls solely to one person, but rather belongs and calls to any person who will be aware of the gaze to which she submits — a gaze that is characteristic of all tourists as consumers.



fig. 12 - Anonymous tourists and global Irishness



## GILROY GOES GLOBAL

To understand the global nature of the Guinness image, consider this example. The Irish Tourist Board web site ([www.ireland.ie](http://www.ireland.ie)) features links to various regions of Ireland. The site that pops up for Dublin includes a section with free electronic postcards. Two of the three most popular cards are Guinness-related. One card is the image of an anonymous group of tourists in front of St. James' Gate, and another pictures antique Guinness bottles [fig. 12, 13]. Feasibly, these cards could be sent from anywhere in the world to anywhere else. These cards are now only "Greetings from Dublin" to the extent that, through a use of the gaze, they remind the viewer or sender of the Storehouse's location.



fig. 13 - "Greetings from Dublin"

How are Gilroy's advertisements used in foreign countries as representations of Ireland and Irish culture? The most fruitful analysis of international promotion of the "My goodness" campaign will be upon the top five markets of Guinness (exclusive of Ireland itself) — the United Kingdom, Nigeria and Cameroon, and the United States. Many Guinness ads that have been used in foreign countries will be similar to those from Ireland, but many will also cater to specific markets. Gilroy's ads managed to translate across cultural boundaries relatively well,

but many of the artist's concepts had to be adapted for the market. Likewise, ads and images of Ireland have changed to appeal to different gazes and changing markets with changing interests. Plenty of the advertisements used abroad do not portray any form of Irishness other than the fact that the consumer is drinking a Guinness.

As we have seen, many of Guinness' most popular advertisements were initially directed towards the market in Great Britain. The parallelism between developments of Gilroy's advertisements with the Guinness trade in Britain and the tourism trade in Ireland provides us the clearest understanding of how closely these advertisements have come to resemble tourist publications, and have come to promote the desires of the tourist gaze. The United Kingdom is currently the number one market for Guinness ("Guinness Facts"). In the Irish historical and political context, Arthur Guinness was a successful member of the Protestant ruling class who created a product that eventually came to represent the working-class Catholics. McGovern notes that "18th- and early 19th-century English travellers...regularly commented on the drinking habits of the peasantry and, indeed, of other social classes too" (85). Even in the chance that the product promotes the stereotype of Irish workers, the British are a greater market for Guinness in modern times than the Irish are.

Why do the British drink more Guinness than the Irish do? Consider Britain as the former Irish colonizer, and consider tourism as a minor form of colonization, and a means of exoticizing and othering a foreign culture. First, we must realize that the word "tourist" has a negative stigma in many cultures. Although tourist patronage feeds the economy, it might also be potentially damaging to the culture that existed before tourism. Sharon Bohn Gmelch notes that "many locals have no direct economic involvement in their area's tourism industry" and "too often tourism's impact is asymmetrical" (10-11). That is, tourists can perform as many negative effects on a destination as positive ones. Of course, the British cannot be the only country considered in this context of tourist as colonial ruler and supposed superior. The early conjunction of British citizens visiting the recently liberated Irish colony is more closely tied to true colonial rule than any contemporary tourists would be. Another caution to this stance is that



cultures will change whether or not tourism is implemented in the national economy — internal stimuli can catalyze cultural shifts just as well as outside stimuli can. Still, just as they are the greatest consumers of Guinness, the British are the most direct and the earliest example of the tourist gaze as a means of exoticizing Ireland. From previous discussions of Guinness as an embodiment of Irish exoticism, we see something of the desire to experience a strange culture in the British motivations to tour Ireland.

The United States is the currently the fourth-largest Guinness market in the world. Guinness was first shipped to the West Indies in 1802, and was first bottled in New York City in 1910 (“Through Time”). Like the aforementioned American tourist who might be drawn to the Ireland signified in images of rural life, heritage seekers might also find the resurgence of Gilroy’s ads an appealing reason to visit the Guinness Storehouse. Use of Gilroy’s advertisements in the United States has been primarily in the context of antiquarian curiosity. For consumers who are already loyal to the Guinness brand, the ads provoke a gaze predicated on heritage and traditions that must be equated with these historically proven products. For someone who does not drink or is not yet brand-loyal, the images become a charming image of Ireland much in the same way that an image of rural life and welcome might interpellate someone who does not have Irish heritage. The image gazed upon in both cases is one of relaxation — in Gilroy’s ads Ireland is as entertaining and leisurely as a day at the zoo, whereas the homey image of an Irish farmer promises visitors a place removed from the bustle and anxieties of modern society. Again, we understand that the rural or historical Ireland portrayed in advertisements geared towards this type of tourist would not be technologically equipped to distribute these images globally. The American tourist’s anticipation of welcome is the first stage of ideological hailing, and the anticipation becomes a foundation for the gaze.

An example of the images of welcome that many tourist publications use to portray Ireland is “The Surge and Settle,” a humorous novelty “newspaper” featured on the United States Guinness web site during the weeks around St. Patrick’s Day. The “front page” of the paper uses Gilroy’s toucans as a logo, and one of the headlines reads “bridge from Ireland to America

Figuring in behind the United Kingdom and Ireland itself, Nigeria is the third-largest Guinness market. Cameroon registers fifth-largest, and several other West African countries, as well as South Africa, are important markets for the company (“Guinness Facts”). The use of “My goodness” in African countries is an intriguing study of how the advertisements can assume very distinct and non-Irish characteristics for use in specific nations. Obviously, the imagery had to shift from a focus on the zoo animals in order to attract the gaze of audiences in these countries. Many of the animals featured in the zoo campaign are native to certain African nations, so the surprise of exoticism that “My goodness” heralds is not effective here — these audiences must be hailed with the use of other visuals. A different type of familiarity must be the appeal here, since what is exotic to the other Guinness markets is common to many consumers in Africa.

Not only is the element of exoticism abandoned in these markets, but the entire “My goodness” campaign founded in difference and surprise was not used in Africa. Rather, the “Guinness for Strength” advertisements were used. The focus shifted away from Gilroy’s cartoon visuals from this campaign towards images that would be familiar to local consumers. One such ad, presented in Cameroon and the Ivory Coast in the 1990s, features a photograph of an athlete with a javelin in a similar stance to Gilroy’s man with a girder. The ad reads “Puissance” (the French word for power or strength) in bold letters at the top, and “Guinness is good for you” in smaller font at the bottom [fig. 14]. A similar ad from Nigeria in 1962 reads “Guinness gives you Power” and pictures a cartoon man with a large wooden slab — something like a combination of Gilroy’s lumberjack and steel girder man [fig. 15].

Because these advertisements appeal to a local crowd with familiar images, we should understand that the African market has been given a reason to drink Guinness at home — the most familiar of places. Since the ads in Africa do not portray distinct Irishness aside from Guinness as an Irish product, Irish tourism must not be heavily marketed in Africa. Likewise, the exoticism and surprise are abandoned concepts. Perhaps this is so because these African countries more frequently receive tourists than export them. To portray the signs of surprise,



exoticism, and visual interpellation that are so common to tourist literature in countries that welcome tourists would be a cruel irony. Ads meant to motivate tourism in a toured nation would become a mockery of the native culture's commodification. The use of familiar images in African Guinness advertisements could be a way to discourage foreign nationals and refugees from traveling, or from immigrating and settling in Ireland. In a brief history of Ireland, Senia Pařeta mentions that this practice that has increased drastically in the last thirty years — the time between the premiers of these two advertisements (134). We see that these advertisements had to be adapted to suit the audience in order not to deride the native countries' developing tourist industries and at the same time to encourage home consumption of Guinness.

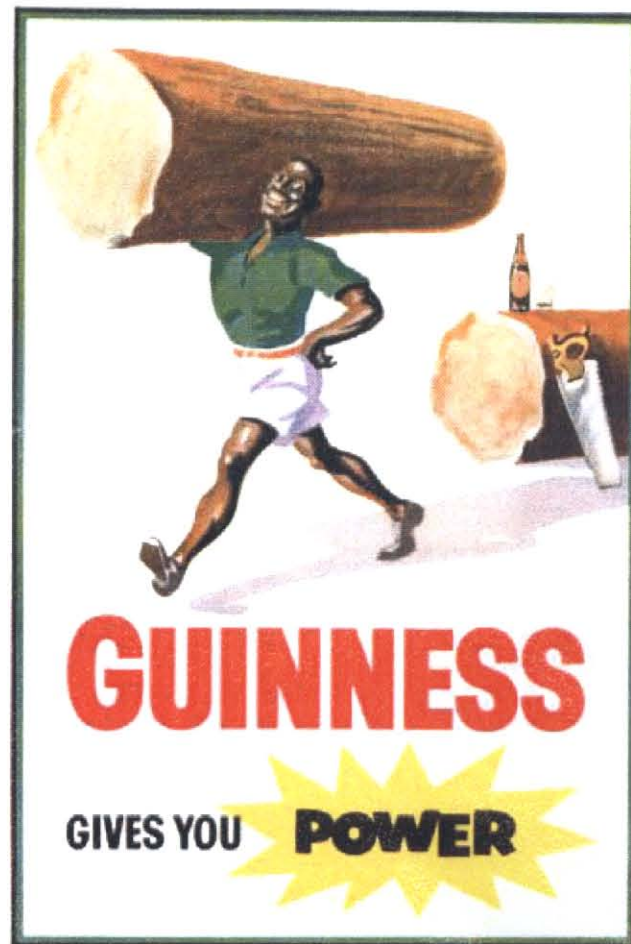


fig. 15 - Another version of the girder ad from Nigeria

## CULTURAL WORK AND MESSAGES OF A GUINNESS ADVERTISEMENT

When I visited the Guinness Storehouse this March, I talked to a young security worker during my research. He confessed that he had worked at the Storehouse for two weeks and was already tired of seeing Guinness brand products, logos, and advertisements everywhere he goes. The work that Guinness advertisements have completed for Ireland — whether in Ireland or in other countries — has undeniably shaped much of Ireland's cultural image, whether for good or for bad. Barbara O'Connor argues that cultural identities are formed from perceptions "which certain people both inside and outside our culture produce for us," and "the way in which we see ourselves is substantially determined by the way in which we are seen by others" (68). Through means of everyday existence and habits, natives shape their culture, whereas visitors bring foreign perspectives when they tour a country. Although this identity formation requires the cooperative participation of many gazes from many nations, the images produced are not always advantageous to the constructed culture. For example, the stereotype that the Irish are heavy drinkers has to have begun as an observation, whether by a native or a visitor, and the stereotype has grown out of proportion since it was first perceived in an outsider's gaze. Even though the trait is obviously an unfair generalization, the image of alcoholism has become a recognizable part of the Irish cultural identity. Unfortunately, this trait could have been arbitrarily assigned to any culture, as alcoholism is a problem in many different nations. Whether or not elements of the cultural identity are true does not change that these are various ways by which people identify Irish natives.

Whether in the form of a stereotype or an advertisement that might annoy natives, any exported image of Ireland is a significant contributor to the impressions that foreigners have of a nation under scrutiny of the tourist gaze. Without the existence of these images, the country would not be known well, or perhaps would not be known at all. The "My goodness" images of Ireland as an exotic and exciting place are necessary visuals for the dialogue of tourist attraction. Certainly, very few tourists would be shocked to know that these animals are not native to Ireland. What attracts tourists in these ads is not the visual representations of animals, but rather



the exaggerated brand of exoticism and excitement a tourist would hope to find in a visit to Ireland. The animals are imbued with a vitality that gives us somewhat of an impression of the Irish people. These visuals propose that perhaps the Irish are the like these creatures — they enjoy a drink and are somewhat prankish, but are also fun-loving and wholly friendly. However, Sharon Bohn Gmelch suggests that “the images and stereotypes locals have of tourists can be as distorted as the tourists’ ideas about them” (14). We must keep in mind that if the zoo animals represent a certain generalization of the Irish, then the hapless zookeeper might come to signify the perception that tourists are blundering and careless.

When considering the “My goodness” advertisements in dialogue with tourist literature, the question arises of whether or not tourism could be considered a simplified version of colonization or an exercise in ethnic superiority. The exotic nature of the advertisements and other tourist publications would suggest that the othering is necessary, and is frequently detrimental to a culture’s identity. O’Connor suggests that “the inherent sense of superiority of the colonist...is equally a hallmark of the contemporary tourist” (77). However, perhaps when consumers drink Guinness they are not endorsing colonialism or trying to make themselves superior to the natives, but are instead endorsing internationalism and a global marketplace. Perhaps they are endorsing the aspect of tourism that contributes to the economic vitality of a country. Perhaps they are completely unaware of the effects that this patronage has on the destination of choice. The benefits and detriments of tourism in a society are always necessarily in conflict with one another, and this is a conflict that must be worked out in the minds of both tourists and natives. Tourists must decide whether or not they will be patronizing and condescending visitors or informed and respectful travelers, whether or not they will make demands on the tourist industry workers or make careful decisions about how they represent their own cultures. The natives must decide whether or not they appreciate or accept the economic effects and the changes in their culture’s identity that these visitors will invariably bring.

The marketing of national products that might be sources of pride to natives is integral to globalization. If images of a product did not circulate around the world to be consumed by

various tourist gazes, people would not be able to consume the images and experience the culture vicariously, without having to visit the country at all. Advertising might be considered a form of tourism for those unable to leave their home country. Much like the market for Guinness from a bottle or a can, a person does not need to leave home in order to elicit the desired cultural experience that this product can supposedly bring. Just as marketing is necessary to give a product renown, globalization is necessary to open a country to an international marketplace and an economy that can flourish in the modern era — an economy that frequently earns part of its profits through tourism. A traveler who sees advertisements and chooses to visit Ireland would not have had access to these images without the potential to reach a broad audience that globalization has afforded.

Guinness advertisements must necessarily represent Ireland, because they have come from Ireland. Even if the ads have been filtered through international markets and scrutinized under various gazes, they are still visualizations of an Irish product. Similarly, travel writing and tourist publications represent Ireland through the eyes of natives and foreigners jointly. That is, these publications must be written by someone with a good knowledge of the country, but marketed towards an audience that is unfamiliar with the proposed destination. Guinness ads serve as a unique type of tourist writing when they are presented abroad. Advertisements bring commerce to Ireland whether or not the consumer decides to travel. A person can have an Irish experience without visiting the country if she drinks Guinness, or even if she consumes the images in the advertisement. If viewers decide that the ads are enticement enough to visit Ireland, the ads become neo-tourist publications to draw a specific audience. With the resurrection of Gilroy's advertising campaigns for use in contemporary markets, the visuals have become attractions to even broader audiences than before.

A key way in which both tourist publications and Guinness advertisements have shaped Irish culture is through their role as emissaries of Irishness and the Irish craic. Frequently, tourist publications invoke the Guinness brand name to bolster credibility as an accurate representation of Irish culture. For example, *The Rough Guide to Ireland* is a tour book divided into three



sections — practical travel information, the guide itself, and a table of contents. Each of the three sections has a title page featuring a photo collage, and two of the collages feature prominent Guinness images, ready to be gazed upon and consumed. Under the “food and drink” section of practical information, the writers mention that “the classic Irish drink is, of course, Guinness” (41). These are images that people now equate with the country’s culture. But how accurately do the images represent Ireland? After all, Ireland is not simply a string of pubs, nor is it the rural home that is prevalent in American advertising. The “My Goodness” ads might even lead some viewers to believe that Ireland is famous for its zoos. The best way to qualify Gilroy’s Guinness advertisements as accurate representatives of Irish culture is through use of the phrase “My goodness.” The element of surprise does not necessarily connote othering or a detrimental use of a gaze. The hypothetical Guinness tourist from the beginning of the essay might be heard to exclaim the words from that familiar campaign when she enters the Storehouse — Guinness does not offer a typical brewery tour. Without condescension, a tourist will most likely find Ireland to be surprising. The country offers more than any tourist could have expected — after all, expectations are not the same as the lived experience of tourism.

In conjunction with the questions of when Guinness as advertised and consumed abroad is or is not an accurate portrayal of Ireland, we must move to the question of when tourism in Ireland is or is not an accurate portrayal of the country. What images of Ireland that are marketed abroad are inherently Irish, if any? Like the first views the tourist takes in the Storehouse, Ireland’s reality is surprising. Any tourist destination has the potential for surprise. A tourist might be expecting her destination to be a place completely different from that which she will experience. She might be expecting something comparable to what she will experience, but the simple fact is that once she steps off the plane and onto the ground, she will no longer be expecting or gazing at images in anticipation of her arrival. Rather, she will be participating in and gazing at a reality that exceeds the bounds of imagination. Small differences such as this are what make each tourist experience a unique event. Just as Guinness advertisements never cease

to portray an Irish product, a tourist's experience in Ireland will never be anything but a genuine Irish experience.

## CONCLUSION

John Gilroy's famous Guinness advertisements have become, in the past decade, significant fields of tourist discourse. The ads' use in today's largest Guinness markets has proven the company's authority and success as an international business. However, the economic impacts of Guinness around the world are slight when compared with the social and cultural repercussions that the company's ad campaigns have effected. Guinness has changed not only the cultural identity of Ireland, but the potential for foreign countries to import and understand the constructs of other societies. Guinness is one of the leading images of Irishness worldwide, and this image will continue to affect the way people think about Ireland, whether those people are native to the country or not.

The ability for any one culture to contribute to the formation of any other culture is a sure sign of a globalizing world. This world is one in which consumers can experience a different culture in their own homes, and in which tourists can subject themselves to the surprises of immersion in a foreign country. Similarly to the balanced positive and negative effects of tourism within a country, the international nature of cultural construction can lead either to a world in which national identities are subsumed under a single heading or one in which pride is bolstered in the face of assimilation. Surely, the more frequently a consumer purchases a product from a different country, and the more frequently a tourist travels to experience different cultures, the better these people will come to understand and respect the differences and similarities that exist across cultural boundaries.



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